

# OPINION

## THE CHRONICLE

James Taylor Jr.  
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## Our Mission

*The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community*

### IN MEMORIAM

**Imogene McDaniel Harris,**  
November 20, 1931 – July 22, 2020

### NNPA salutes the memory and legacy of publisher Imogene McDaniel Harris

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) expresses sincere condolences to the family of Mrs. Imogene McDaniel Harris, the distinguished publisher of the Gary INFO Newspaper, who passed on July 22, 2020.

Newspaper publisher, educator, community activist and matriarch Imogene Harris, 88, of Gary, Ind., completed her earthly assignment on Wednesday, July 22, after a lingering illness.

Imogene was born in Gary, Ind., a city she devoted a lifetime of love to, on Nov. 20, 1931, the child of Lohney L. and Geneva Scott McDaniel. She graduated from Gary Roosevelt High School and briefly attended Hampton Institute (University) in Hampton, Virginia. Imogene continued on to receive a bachelor's degree from Indiana University, in Bloomington, Indiana.

Imogene joined in nuptial bliss with her soul mate, James Templeton (J.T.) Harris, Jr., on Sept. 1, 1951. Their blessed union lasted 51 years, until J.T.'s transition to glory in 2001.

Imogene taught in the Gary Public School System for many years, but her life's calling was partnering with J.T. to run the family businesses – Harris Printing Company (established in the 1950s) and Gary INFO Newspaper (founded in 1963). They diligently produced a publication that became the voice of African Americans throughout northwest Indiana for more than four decades. From newspaper boys and girls trying to earn pocket change, to eventual affluent and successful individuals around the nation, "The Shop," as Info's midtown location was affectionately known, was more than a place for workers to hone their craft, it was a launching pad for life.

Imogene was a member of Delaney Memorial United Methodist Church, which is now Christ Memorial Methodist Church, as well as memberships in the Gary branch NAACP, the Gary Urban League Guild, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Betu Nu Chapter (1962). Imogene was recognized by the NNPA and maintained a collegial relationship with the founding members of the NNPA, founded in 1940. Harris was also a founding member of the Lake County Association of Black Communicators.

Her many lifetime accolades included the Drum Major Award presented to her and J.T. by the Gary Frontiers Service Club for their commitment to eliminate inequality, prejudice, and racism, and a Congressional Record from the Hon. Indiana State Rep. Peter J. Visclosky in 1994 for their commitment to instill equality and justice throughout the City of Gary.

Imogene will be fondly remembered by all for her dedication to excellence, her deep compassion, unswerving principles, thoughtful leadership, devotion to family and community, and loyal friendship.

The family will hold a memorial service at a future date where her transition will truly be celebrated. Arrangements are being handled by Guy & Allen Funeral Home in Gary, Ind.

### We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to letters@wschronicle.com before 5 p.m. Friday for the next week's publication date.

Letters intended for publication should be addressed "Letters to the Editor" and include your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep letters to 350 words or less.

If you are writing a guest column, please include a photo of yourself, your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep guest columns to 550 words or less. Letters and columns can also be mailed or dropped off at W-S Chronicle, 1300 E. Fifth St., W-S, NC, 27101; or sent via our website: www.wschronicle.com.

We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for clarity or brevity and determine when and whether material will be used.

We welcome your comments at our website.

Also, go to our Facebook page to comment. We are at facebook.com/WSChronicle.



## Dynamic Duo?

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Education concerns

To The Editor:

The achievement gap - the gap between test scores of low income students and wealthier students - widened in North Carolina more than in any other state between 2011 and 2014, according to the Education Equality Index. The Education Equality Index is a national measure of the achievement gap that includes city and state information.

In our Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools, in 2017, the school board established a goal of closing the student achievement gap by 10 percentage points district-wide while still increasing performance across the board. Today, work continues towards closing the achievement gap, and there is much to be done to support our teachers, our students, and their families.

Many studies have shown that the most important resource in helping our students gain proficiency is an excellent teacher. Yet teachers are leaving the profession, due to inadequate pay and resources that make it difficult, if not impossible, to succeed. We must pay them more and give them the respect they deserve.

Dan Besse, running for North Carolina House District 74, is committed to education, and particularly to increasing teacher pay. Dan's mother was a career teacher and principal, and he knows first-hand how important it is to have the best and most dedicated teachers in every classroom.

I'm supporting Dan Besse for North Carolina House because I know he is committed to an excellent education for all of our children.

Marty Pittman  
Winston-Salem

### National Day of Prayer

To The Editor:

As we Christians know, fervent prayer moves the hands of God. In Joshua Chapter 6, God delivered Jericho into Israel's hands and they did not even need to fight. Likewise, in 2 Chronicles Chapter 20 when three enemy armies came to wage war against King Jehoshaphat, he "proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah ... and gathered together to seek the Lord."

The world is in a war! COVID-19 has disrupted our way of life and everything else in the world. Is it possible we have forgotten that God is in charge and in control of everything and everyone? Have we gotten so far away from what is morally right and turned a blind eye to what He intended and that there are consequences for our be-

havior? Look at the Flood brought on by the corruption of mankind (Genesis 6-7); Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19).

What about it, Pastors, Ministers and Lay People of our community and surrounding area? Can you come together and organize a time of national prayer to petition God to rid the world of COVID-19? It certainly worked for Joshua and King Jehoshaphat. Nothing else seems to be working.

Goldia Anderson  
Winston-Salem

### Terri LeGrand for Senate District 31

To The Editor:

For ten years the Republican majority in the Legislature has cut public school funding. A 2019 report ranked North Carolina as 46th in the country for per pupil funding. With the pandemic raging, our schools are facing huge cost increases as they try to provide a solid education for all our children.

North Carolina needs legislators who support public education and will fight for our schools. Terri LeGrand, running for Senate District 31, is that candidate.

Several years ago the General Assembly slashed unemployment benefits to workers laid off from their jobs. North Carolina is one of only two states in the country that offers only 12 weeks of support to out of work North Carolinians.

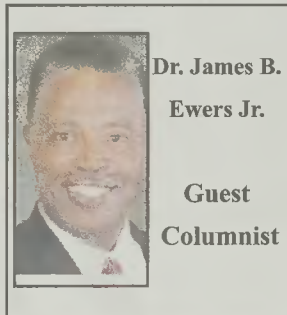
Terri LeGrand knows North Carolina can, and should, do better. Terri has pledged to work hard to be more responsive to the needs of the unemployed and their families. Our workers are real people with real needs, not simply a number in the budget.

Terri LeGrand has long supported affordable healthcare and expanding Medicaid, which has been repeatedly blocked in the General Assembly. By expanding Medicaid, over 500,000 North Carolinians would become eligible for healthcare coverage. With so many families losing their insurance during COVID-19, making healthcare affordable should be a priority for our elected officials.

Terri LeGrand demonstrates what intelligent and caring leadership looks like. She is the best person to help lead North Carolina forward during these challenging times.

Andrea Ostberg  
Winston-Salem

## Will schools open safely despite the pandemic?



Dr. James B. Ewers Jr.  
Guest Columnist

I loved school when I was a student and a teacher. There was something about the opening of school each year that was exciting. It never got old.

As a student, it was probably because I would see a lot of my friends again. While it may sound strange, I enjoyed the routine of school. There were set times for everything so all of us knew what was going to happen.

When I became a teacher, it was the joy and exhilaration of watching students learn on their way to becoming successful. There was a certain satisfaction that I received by being a part of their lives. If you were or are a teacher, you know what I mean.

COVID-19 has shown us just how important and valuable teachers are. Some folks took teachers for granted. Yet those same folks are extolling the values and virtues of teachers. What a difference five months can make.

Will it make more college students want to become teachers? We will see.

This pandemic has created major problems with opening schools this year. What was once a seamless transition from summer vacation to school opening is now fraught with challenges from all fronts. Now, the federal government has gotten into the school opening business.

How can that be? The current administration has threatened to withhold funds if the schools do not open on time. The Secretary of Education has echoed these same sentiments.

I do not think school systems are intimidated by this warning. School systems have students and teachers in them. They know what is best for their individual situations. They will not bow down to political pressure because they are concerned about the health and welfare of all involved. It is my strong opinion that schools that open without the proper protocols in place will be the first to have problems.

Georgia is an interesting case study. When it comes to opening schools, Gov. Brian Kemp says he wants kids back in school because they are safer there from a nutrition

standpoint, child abuse and human trafficking perspectives.

However, Gwinnett County Public Schools, the largest in Georgia, will have all virtual learning. Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks said, "I think we all understand that face-to-face instruction is always a preferred model, but that needs to be done at this time with a pretty good assurance that students and staff will be safe. And we did not feel like this was the case," he told NPR in an interview on Wednesday.

Meanwhile Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York says that schools there will open and have in-person classes. The school system has 212,296 teachers. By any barometer, that is a lot of teachers.

Parents, schools, students and teachers have been cast into the national spotlight. They do not want to be, but they are. Take for example, Hannah Watters, a high school student in Georgia.

She is a student at North Paulding High School in the Atlanta area. She posted a picture of her high school's crowded corridors with only a few students wearing masks. She was immediately suspended because school of-

ficials say that she violated the student code of conduct. However, the suspension was overturned and she is now back in school, according to her mother, Lynne Watters.

"I would like to say this was some good and necessary trouble," said Hannah Watters. Sound familiar?

There are no easy answers and one size fits all solutions. However, there must be some guiding principles. At what cost do you put students and teachers in a classroom? We know this disease spreads like wildfire.

Will online learning be with us for a while? That is the question school leaders are grappling with now. Pushing forward, masks and hand sanitizers will become a part of school supplies. Our country will exercise its creative spirit.

That means school systems, too.

James B. Ewers Jr. is a former tennis champion at Atkins High School and played college tennis at Johnson C. Smith University where he was all-conference for four years. He is a retired college administrator and can be reached at overtimefergie.2020@yahoo.com.